

M2044  
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New York, Group II  
Grammar of Work series, tape 5 of 9

Mr. Nyland: So now you remember that it is really a Monday Group and that I would prefer those who have regularly attended on Monday and Wednesday, that they ask the questions. It does not mean that Warwick and the rest cannot ask; of course it's all right, but primarily make sure that those of Monday could be, let's hope, satisfied.

You see, you come here, I hope, with a wish for getting some food. And it's food of a different kind than one is used to, because particularly since the requirement is that you have to eat it. But only when you eat it, you will find out if you can digest it and if it will do you some good. Otherwise, of course, you don't have to eat. You don't eat just for the fun of it. At the same time, it presupposes that you're hungry. And I think there are several people who are hungry and looking for some kind of food and then eat and get some sustenance out of it, but maybe not lasting, and maybe not the right kind of a taste. It would be very nice if you could determine what kind of a taste you want to have satisfied. That would require, on your part, a great deal of knowledge, and maybe such knowledge can only come after experiences in life so that then you know that there are certain things that really could be satisfied—at least you hope so—and then you start looking for that kind of a taste.

Now, a great deal of that what you eat is what we call 'roughage.' Roughage is simply the way by which food—that is, the nutritive value—is carried. In itself it is not ... it may be palatable, but it's not giving you nourishment. There are certain qualities in food that belong there for the nourishment, and for that reason that salt is added—to make it more palatable. Salt in this kind of Work is theoretical knowledge, and the practicality of a food is, of course, the nourishment. The roughage simply means it has to be put in a certain way that it could be made either half-palatable or that it will not be too strong, too concentrated. Those are all requirements

for food, and when you apply it now to the desire for the satisfaction of a spiritual life or that what really makes a person worthwhile, then the selection of such food is very difficult to make and you sometimes may have to try many times before you find something that is really good enough, or at least that it will give you hope. The difficulty in that is that you overeat sometimes, and that sometimes you put too much salt with it. Salt in itself is only good to give it a taste. But if you have too much salt it may make you too thirsty and that would wash the food away again, and if there is too much salt in the food it becomes poisonous.

That's why I worry many times about questions which are purely theory, satisfaction of a certain kind that you feel your mind would like; and every once in a while the argument is used that unless you know the totality of theoretical knowledge and the framework in which this kind of a food is placed, you could not Work unless you knew everything first. The solution, of course, to eating is just the other way: you taste it and you make it palatable with a little salt, and you have to keep track of how much salt you want to use so as not to spoil the food, and a little bit of salt goes a very long way.

The background is of course always what I call 'roughage,' of that what will carry the food. The roughage is made up by the conditions in which you live, and the creation of a hunger is many times dependent on that what is the carrier of the food itself. And many times the food, even of nourishing value, can be very small, but you cannot take it in its concentrated form. And because of that, meetings are necessary: to give elucidation of the variety of different questions which will come up and then can be placed in relation to a perspective so that then the food can be made not only palatable but also digestible, and then it is up to you and your stomach to take it and to see what you can do with it.

It's really that what I have in mind with meetings of this kind. We're not particularly interested in an exchange of ideas like there is many times in a seminar or in an encounter group. Usually they don't help you very much, only to the extent that it enables you to formulate. But the formulation of your own questions are many times not the formulation of someone else, and so often in such discussions the superficiality is king and you don't want to go further, partly because you're afraid of someone else criticizing you and thinking that you are really dumb, and you hesitate to talk about affairs which really are much more important but you consider a little bit too private.

You see, in regard to this kind of Work, we're all in the same boat. There's a tremendous

distance to go, and we start at the beginning and although we start to row with the oars we have, there are too many currents against us, and even the passage is not known. And it is constantly a discovery, an adventure for yourself, so that each person taking in that kind of a discovery will again digest it differently, dependent on his personality and all the different things that have made his personality whatever it is. And the reactions of such a person—and in fact actually of each person—is different, and there is very difficulty ... a great difficulty in even comparing, in the beginning, results.

The questions have to remain personal, the answer should also fit where you live so that you can take it. But discussions among yourselves in the beginning is really not worthwhile enough, because you don't talk the same language. Gradually out of the experiences you learn a language. The experience is based not on your personality. It is attracted by that what you are as a person, and the different questions you have in your life will make you ask another question to solve the different questions; but then again, in the beginning that particular kind of a question that you would ask is colored very much by your own bringing-up—where you come from, and your experiences. And gradually out of such attempts there will come a common denominator of questions which then have to do with human qualities which are akin to everybody and become gradually independent of a personality and, as it were, they become more 'essential.'

How far we are in asking essential questions, that is still a very open question. It's not certain that one even knows for oneself where the superficiality stops or goes over into essentiality. But because of constantly talking about one's experience and the difficulties there are inherent in an experience, particularly when it has to do with a development of an inner life about which very little is really known, that gradually the experience will furnish the language and it is not any longer dependent—not as much, anymore—on the coloration of your personality. That's why you have to keep that constantly in mind, that when you ask a question, it has to be for a satisfaction of that what I call 'inner life,' because that is where the language belongs.

The language of superficiality is easy. It's a collection of words and certain abstract ideas which are more or less known to many people, and which are used much too much in encounter groups. This kind of Work goes direct to you. You react to it and then you see what you wish to do with it—as I say, 'eating' it—and then you afterwards describe what has been the experience of such eating. That becomes essential for you. And out of the totality of many questions you

will gradually distill the essential quality—that is, you will go to the root of a question and not get stuck on the superficial words which are many times used for explaining it.

I want to say that, because we want to get as much benefit from these meetings as we can get. Do not waste time of someone else. At the same time, you are entitled to ask a question that really belongs to you and your essential life. And never mind, for the time being, how difficult it is to talk about things you have very seldom talked about and have belonged, for a long time maybe, to your private life.

There's a tremendous amount of what is called 'private life' that one can talk about in very general terms. And you need not be afraid that you will lose the essential essence of your private life; that becomes only important for yourself when you actually have to make a decision. You do not make decisions now. You gather information, and you hope that it will be the kind of food that you will want to eat. After you have eaten and you come back, you talk about what has been the experience—if it was too much, or not clear, or not digestible enough, or not reaching the right place in you, or not counteracting conditions in which you live in your ordinary life where you would like to apply the ideas as they are promulgated or in their simplicity—so that that can lead to another question and another. In that way, we can continue. As I say, not too much theory. It is so useless. Much of Ouspensky in his book In Search is quite, I would call it even, 'nonsensical.'

For yourself in your life, when once the ideas start to get hold, then of course you will wish to use what you have already acquired in your life. And it is at that time that the interests which partly may have even brought you to this kind of a meeting, or to the wish to ask some questions, will become of great use to you: All the different philosophies or your studies; or your contacts with other people; or the expressions of yourself in any form of art and also ... in particularly any kind of religion that you have been brought up with in which certain words and sentences have taken on a very definite meaning for you, more or less of a dogmatic kind but belonging very clearly to a doctrine which is again a part of different denominations and different kinds of religions.

When you listen to the ideas of Gurdjieff, you will not immediately see the religious value of them. And it's partly because you don't understand your own religion. Religion many times, as it has been given—and as it is at the present time in existence through churches and through well-meaning ministers and priests and rabbis, and so forth—do not touch you in the sense that

the Bible is written, where there are the requirements of the Ten Commandments or when certain phraseology is used in the Bible and where the Bible definitely is a holy script, a scripture which has only the blessing of the Lord.

In that sense, then, when religion is interpreted and reinterpreted over the ages it loses the essential value and in its place there is substituted a certain form of organization; and then, of course, the acknowledgment of a hierarchy, and whatever then is said by so-called people who are 'higher up' you will have to take because you are part of that kind of a denomination. And in the particular attempt to eat it, you eat it many times as cliché, or you do it because you have been brought up with it and you don't know any better. And many times it is even sinful to question it and to say, "But I use the word 'God' and what is meant," it becomes almost something you never should do, and many times it is considered a sin to question the wisdom of God. And at the same time, it leaves you confused.

There are of course terms in Gurdjieff's All and Everything, and many times reminiscent of religion; and one chapter completely devoted to that, in which different kind of religions are compared more or less, but also described in accordance with essential values of the religion like it used to be when the religion originally was formed. And for us, of course, it doesn't mean very much to read about Tibet and even about Buddha, because we are not brought up in that kind of a section of the world. And when it has to do with Christianity, we have such a tremendous quantity, almost, to choose from; and so many wars have been carried out in the name of Christianity that of course we do not know anymore what to take, and who has a right to believe that their religion is the only one, or their way of interpreting it. To extract out of that, for yourself, what is an essential value requires that you become more open and leave the different terminologies, as used, to whatever they may have meant, but you try to find out what is the meaning for you in your life.

I would like to say just a little more about that before we go to some questions. So often we talk about Jesus Christ; that is, in Christian religion of course we do, but also when it is considered from different standpoints and Jesus Christ is considered a Messenger from Above, interpreted in many ways as the person through whom, and in between, Man could reach God; simply because he could not go direct, he would need a kind of a mediator who then would function as a bridge between this world and Heaven. And the message which such a person then brings to Earth is to tell people how to prepare and how to become different kind of people; or to

emphasize that what is not developed by nature but could be given an indication as a result of an understanding of Great Nature if one could see what is really meant by the natural phenomena and the realization of the Earth in connection with a solar system cosmologically speaking, or what takes place within a Man when he becomes acquainted with the world of himself and then sees different layers of essential quality and starts to distinguish gradually what seems more permanent as against that what is ephemeral.

When Jesus Christ talks and explains after thirty years of study—and usually one is assuming it now that he spent his time with the Essenes; learning, going through the process of the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, and quite definitely being in a certain Order where he had to understand what was meant to be a Man on Earth before he could teach—and then in three years would teach that what he considered most essential for the message he had to carry and which he would have to bring to the Earth. Now we base our Christianity on such facts as we can extract from the church or what we can extract from the Bible, or in the apocryphal books or the books which have not been collected and gradually become ... or put in their appearance somewhere, and whatever may be described in the Essene manuscripts and all the Dead Sea Scrolls.

We learn more and more about the surrounding, I don't think we will learn more ... or can learn more from the essential quality of the message. Jesus Christ was a Man on Earth, at the same time Son of the Father in Heaven. Whatever that means as allegory, the name 'Jesus' and 'Christ' we like to separate—that Jesus was the Man, and Christ was his message. The question of Christ, and Christianity on which it is based, is really a method which will lead to freedom from bondage of the Earth; and that during the time that he is on Earth, a Man should prepare for his death in order then, when he dies, there is something else that can continue with his life force. Having been placed on Earth and having the responsibility for following certain requirements, that then the preparation for that should be in line with an attempt of becoming free. And free from the bondage of Earth means freedom from one's physical body.

So that Christ, in his message, would have to tell about what a Man should do. And giving—in the Sermon on the Mount and the Ten Commandments, which have been repeatedly stated what is really the necessity for a Man to understand his own life—Christ is the method of Work, Jesus is the Messenger who carries that message. And from our standpoint, the meaning of Christ is how to reach freedom. And when Gurdjieff talks about Work on oneself, that is

Christ in the essential essence of what a Man should know about religion, and to what extent such a religion could become a guide for his life.

[Aside: Come in and close the door.]

I wanted to elucidate a little bit on that, because we are a mixed Group and there are different people, I'm sure, who come from very different kinds of life—backgrounds—and I do not like you to have a different kind of an impression of what we want to talk about, particularly when it might look as if Gurdjieff is talking a little bit of a doctrine all of his own.

Gurdjieff talks esoteric knowledge, and it is that what will help a Man to understand his inner life. Gurdjieff described different kinds of Groups as exoteric, mesoteric, and esoteric, esoteric being the inner Group, 'meso' that what is between the inner and the outer. When one becomes interested in Work, one selects what particular path to take in a mesoteric Group in which then is explained the method and with which goes the requirement to apply it in order then to enter at certain times, if possible, an esoteric Group—meaning by that, that gradually, because of digesting a food, a Man will change and will then be able to understand certain things which are now abracadabra for him but then take on a meaning. And the acquisition of that kind of a wisdom which is now hidden and because of that many times called 'secret,' is really then revealed, like the last chapter of the Bible is a revelation of that what is needed for a person to be able to understand how to reach inner values and inner balance.

So, let's talk about your questions now.

Francisco Staffanell: Mr. Nyland?

Mr. Nyland: Yah.

Francisco: Francisco.

Mr. Nyland: Yah.

Francisco: At the beginning I had great difficulty with relaxing when I made attempts at Work. And I was able to overcome that difficulty because now I feel that I don't suffer like I used to, in tensions in my body. But now...

Mr. Nyland: Did they make you suffer?

Francisco: Excuse me?

Mr. Nyland: Did they make you suffer? Tensions?

Francisco: Backaches; that type of thing I'm talking about.

Mr. Nyland: Yah, but was that a result of Work?

Francisco: No. I have that—those conditions—and they were like a difficulty in making attempts.

Mr. Nyland: Right.

Francisco: I had ... somehow my body was not relaxed enough and I was not able to relax my body for making Work attempts.

Mr. Nyland: Yah.

Francisco: And, uh, now I believe that I understand what is meant by the ABC of Work. When I make an attempt, I ... if the thought crosses my mind of Work and I'm in the right circumstances, I make a wish for something to Observe me doing whatever I'm doing at the time that I'm doing. I continue or I pause as we have discussed here, but I still ... I feel that there's a certain ... that I don't carry this through enough, and that I have made Observations but I believe that I could do better than what I do. And, uh...

Mr. Nyland: Francisco, on what do you base that—that you can do better.

Francisco: Well, I have for several months been now somehow faltering in ... in the Work. I either talk to myself a lot about what I'm doing—what ... whether what I'm applying is correct—and then the attempt falters; it doesn't go through that ... through the ... just the very beginning of the attempt.

Mr. Nyland: Will we go back just a little? When I wish to Work and I know that ABC and what is required, and I make an attempt to create what we call a little 'I' in order to have an Observation process going on, do I know what the result of that Observation will be?

Francisco: No. One should not know...

Mr. Nyland: So...

Francisco: ...but I do have difficulty in that. I mean I...

Mr. Nyland: That may be. But you see, you cannot describe it; because the difficulty is you say I 'should' have Worked more, the fact is you don't; so you have no reason and you cannot even say that you 'should.'

The acceptance of oneself is that you accept exactly what you are; with the small attempts you can make, or having grown a little lackadaisical or perhaps not being interested—also that one accepts. I think it's in the acceptance of that, that there is much more freedom. Because if you don't like it—what you are—and you criticize it, you will not Work. You keep on criticizing, or not liking the condition in which you happen to be. The freedom is meant to be



free from such dislike. The acceptance simply means: I am what I am. But what I wish to have in the state of what I am, is the continuation of the wish to grow out of it, not knowing where I will go. All I know is: I want to get out of where I am. That is why, in describing the condition as I am, I become gradually acquainted with the conditions which prevent me from being free. I do not describe freedom. I do not describe for myself that I ought to be more attentive one way or the other. I do the best I can at any one time I happen to think about Work and I want to make an attempt.

Don't you see that that makes it much more simple?

Francisco: Yes.

Mr. Nyland: Because you lose yourself in criticisms of yourself.

You see, Francisco, if a person is mechanical, if he actually could understand it in that way—that there is no further question about it—he would be free. You see, I would not have a wish to be different, because I would know I am that, and there is no further arguments. And this is exactly the freedom that I want to seek: that that what is then my instrument—with all the limitations that I can describe in ordinary life—is sufficient for me to create, with a wish, that what can help me to pull myself up out of it with my own bootstraps.

If the emphasis is on the wish for freedom, I have to employ a method that will give me freedom—freedom from thought and association, and a freedom from my feeling: from all likes and dislikes. So, I'm driven to the definition of an acceptance of myself as I am.

You see that.

Francisco: And it's not a mental process.

Mr. Nyland: That part is not a mental process; that is, in that sense I have that wish which is definitely not mental, but I want to make it practical so I have to use my head to tell me what ought to be done, and for that reason I learn ABC. But as soon as I start to dictate what the results ought to be, it becomes again a mental thought process, whereas the method is dependent on the functioning of the mind in a different way than thought. I want to use my mind, but I want to use it in such a way that it is useful for the purpose I have in mind.

You understand.

Francisco: Yeah.

Mr. Nyland: I have a purpose in my mind, but I employ a method which is not mental in the real ... in the regular sense of the word. We make the distinction simply of such mental processes

which we call ‘thought,’ ‘concepts,’ ‘thought-forms,’ ‘pondering,’ and all that what we call ‘mental’ and takes place in the brain; and another concept which we say is ‘Awareness,’ which is also a mental function—that is, the usage of machinery which is not used for that purpose but usually is only used for an ordinary thought process.

So when you say it is not mental, I agree it is not mental in the regular sense. But it is nevertheless a mental process of a different kind of reaching a different kind of result. And this Awareness means that it only is an Observation process giving me facts about myself, without describing or liking or disliking and all that goes with it. At the moment when I want to say that that what little ‘I’ Observes little ‘I’ will accept for whatever it is, I make a definite distinction between a thought process in which I would like to describe what I am, or a feeling process in which I will want to like what I am. In other words, I separate the original function of the intellectual center from all the rest in order to have this intellectual function proceed and grow up in an essential, intellectual sense, not interfered with by the other centers.

You agree?

Francisco: Yes. I ... I follow part of what you’re saying.

Mr. Nyland: Yes. You understand...

Francisco: I think so.

Mr. Nyland: ...that the quintessence is in the acceptance of myself as I am—anywhere, wherever I happen to be, at any time. You understand, with that I introduce other terminology.

‘Anywhere’ I am, I say it is ‘Omnipresent’; ‘anytime’ is freedom from all kind of concepts, sometimes I say it is ‘Omniscient’; and that what I need for the wish should become ‘Omnipotent.’ I have in the beginning—in the description of ABC, or a description of the wish, or a description of the creation of little ‘I’—already in mind an ultimate aim which of course is like Infinity: too far away, but it has attributes which I want to now use in a method in order to reach a state which is freer from the state in which I now am.

All right?

Francisco: All right. Thank you.

Mr. Nyland: Yah. Don’t let’s theorize more about it.

Yah.

Dan Roth: My name is Danny Roth. On Saturday I made an attempt to Work on myself while I was doing some physical work, and I experienced a, um...

Mr. Nyland: What did you do between Monday and Saturday?

Dan: In terms of ... of Working on myself?

Mr. Nyland: Yah, yah.

Dan: I made...

Mr. Nyland: You were here last week, weren't you?

Dan: Yes.

Mr. Nyland: Yah. We talked then about the necessity of applying what you knew.

Dan: I made attempts on myself.

Mr. Nyland: When.

Dan: During the day, but not connected to any specific task.

Mr. Nyland: Yah, but you know I'm not interested in tasks. I'm interested in the application of what you understand of Work and to see then what may be a result, or the state in which you are, or the recognition of that what the little 'I' Observes as being you. In a very general way, it should lead to self-knowledge. And there's a long time between Monday and Saturday; for instance, what did you do Tuesday regarding Work. [buzzer]

That will have to go on the other side. All right, Bill?

side 2      You understand what I mean?

Dan: Yes.

Mr. Nyland: You see, look over your week instead of telling me what happened Saturday. It's quite all right. We might be able to talk about it if it was a task, but a task also has to lead to the existence of something that is unusual. And when you have Tuesday—you might say 'remembering' then the meeting you were at and also the admonition of doing something with it—there should have been something on Tuesday as an attempt; not only a thought; an attempt, the putting to practice, to take it out of the thought and going into the realm of experience and leading to knowledge of yourself at that time when you made the attempt. Otherwise it's not worthwhile.

If I wait until Saturday—assuming I do, thinking that on Saturday it will be better—I miss the boat. I am at any one time a human being, where I am unconscious and realize that perhaps Work could help me to give more insight into what I really am. I should not lose an opportunity then—when I happen to think—and then I must use it in order, let's say, to 'apply' what I know. If I don't do that, I'm really quite superficial about Work; and Wednesday goes by, and maybe a

little bit of a lip-service of, “Yes, I remember Work exists; yes, it would be nice if...; yes, oh well, let me see, here I am,” and without any particular seriousness.

I’m not diminishing the experience of Saturday, but if you wait ‘til Saturday in order then to tell about what you *then* experienced, you are not on the right road. The right road starts immediately after you leave this room. If a person can be affected sufficiently and realizes the necessity that something ought to be done with him, then he will start to make attempts as soon as he has freedom from, let’s say, ‘hearing me’ talk. I cannot expect you now, since you want to listen to what I’m saying. At the same time, it would also be useful if even now, talking about Work, you could make even small attempts of a realization that you, as a person, simply sits there and keeps on breathing and could have an inner life that could be recognized by some part of you, if you could make it. That sometimes, of course the energy that is needed for wanting to listen is so much, or goes only in one direction that you have no desire to take a little bit of it in order to Observe yourself or create a little ‘I’, of course one can understand that. But you’re not that intense, and a great deal of attempts could be made now—in this meeting—by everybody.

One always postpones, thinking that tomorrow will be better. You are today exactly the same as you will be tomorrow: unconscious, repeatedly the same kind of a person with a few different thoughts, maybe, or a few thoughts that come to the foreground now, and tomorrow may have some other thoughts that take their place. You’re not changing during a week. You remain unconscious except for such moments when you start to realize that you are too goddamned unconscious. And the seriousness comes only when you realize that you wish to have something else than this state of yourself. And it does not have to wait until Saturday.

You understand now what I mean?

Dan: Yes. I...

Mr. Nyland: Okay, then you Work this coming week; then we talk about it next meeting. All right?

Dan: Yes.

Mr. Nyland: Good.

Ed Kossoy: Mr. Nyland?

Mr. Nyland: Yah?

Ed: Ed Kossoy.

Mr. Nyland: Who?

Ed: Ed Kossoy?

Mr. Nyland: Yes, Ed.

Ed: In my Work attempts I rarely experience little 'I', or what I seem to understand of it from the few times I have experienced something different. What I experience most of the time, if I can keep myself going, uh, is a change of what seems to be my state. Things look different, but as far as really experiencing something different, most of the time I don't. And I'm aware that I don't, and...

Mr. Nyland: Wait a minute, Ed. Be very careful in the usage of words—when you say you are 'aware' that you don't ... you don't mean 'Aware.' You happen to know, or it came to your notice of some kind. Don't use words, when they belong to Work, in an ordinary sense. You were not Aware about it. You just happened to know it.

Ed: Yes.

Mr. Nyland: Weren't you the person who used the word 'squash'?

Ed: Yes.

Mr. Nyland: Yah.

Ed: Something... I don't remember...

Mr. Nyland: Yah!

Ed: ...the word 'squash' but... [laughter]

Mr. Nyland: Yah, something happened to be 'squashed' that way, wasn't it?

Ed: It was something like that.

Mr. Nyland: Yes, I remember. You were sitting here.

Ed: Right.

Mr. Nyland: Now tell me, what is really your motivation.

Ed: For wanting to Work?

Mr. Nyland: Yes.

Ed: It's the only thing that seems to offer a possibility to something else. It's the only thing that ever made ... gave some result. That possibly is because I haven't really made efforts in other directions, but whatever the reason, it is the only thing that seems like something real.

Mr. Nyland: What kind of books have you read.

Ed: In ... in Work?

Mr. Nyland: No, outside Work.

Ed: Um, Indian things—ah, psychological works. I haven't read much recently, just...

Mr. Nyland: No, at the time. What brought you here.

Ed: Initially?

Mr. Nyland: Yes. How'd you hear about Gurdjieff for the first time. Where.

Ed: The first time I heard about it was, years ago I was working in a psychiatric hospital and one of the patients mentioned it, but I never followed it up. And then about a year later someone I happened to meet was attending the Groups and told me about a meeting where you'd be speaking—at ... somewhere on 46th or 47th Street?—and I went there...

Mr. Nyland: Which one. That one, you mean it? Years ago, wasn't it?

Ed: Yeah. It was about three years ago?

Mr. Nyland: Oh, more than that. Was that at the bookstore, there?

Ed: Yeah, right. Right above it, I think.

Mr. Nyland: Oh. When was that. All right; in any event, we know it. Yah. Good. What was it that attracted you.

Ed: I'm sorry, I didn't hear you.

Mr. Nyland: I say, what was it that attracted you.

Ed: To there?

Mr. Nyland: No. No...

Ed: After I came?

Mr. Nyland: Yeah!

Ed: It just connected somehow. It sounded like something, uh, real. Whatever I ... I don't know what I thought was real or not real, but it somehow connected.

Mr. Nyland: Yah, I'm interested in that. What was the note that was struck. Here you were, a person interested in a variety of little things and so forth, and then all of a sudden you come to the...

Ed: Something that was solid. There was some ... what you were saying, or how you were saying it, or your presence or something, was solid; and I haven't, or hadn't, experienced too much solidity in anything or anybody. And there it was.

Mr. Nyland: Well, how old are you?

Ed: Twenty-eight.

Mr. Nyland: Yah, you could have met some solidity somewhere, couldn't you. But I'm not

talking about that really, because in one's thoughts or the feelings you experience certain things and then you may hear something that really strikes you. I call it striking a 'note' because of its logicity, or because it answers a question you have, or because it opens a perspective.

Ed: Yes.

Mr. Nyland: Any one of those can happen, and I'm interested in what actually did attract you at that time when you heard about Gurdjieff.

Ed: The first thing I read was In Search of the Miraculous and Ouspensky talked about observing yourself, and there was this little diagram about how to do it; you know, to ... looking out but also looking back, and having something ... and I couldn't do it.

Mr. Nyland: No, no. Aside from the fact you couldn't do it. The attraction may be because it was in you that was looking for something, and that was fed at that time.

Ed: Right.

Mr. Nyland: What was it that was in you that was looking—for what.

Ed: The first thing that comes to mind is some ... something solid.

Mr. Nyland: Yes.

Ed: But I ... I can't...

Mr. Nyland: Yah, maybe it's difficult to define. That may be.

Ed: And it was ... and it is certainly ... for me it's different... It's a direction, you know, a way of looking at things rather than just, you know, getting sucked over here and over here and whoever...

Mr. Nyland: Yah, I think it is right. It is right. There are undoubtedly questions that may fall together and be answered by the same answer—questions of a variety of different directions which can get together. What is it that now is maintained in you, as a wish for wanting to Work, or even to make attempts. What is now your motivation.

Ed: Well, I guess mainly it's that ... it's twofold. Number one, I'm seeing a lot of things about myself more and more that I don't like, patterns that just keep repeating over and over. And number two, the few ... some of the attempts that I have made have yielded what seem to be results of a very different kind. And that seems like something, um, that seems like something real, you know. Nothing else...

Mr. Nyland: It's all right. Have you any particular results that were an eye-opener for you? Because on that, the clearer you will see it, the more your eye is opened—I mean, an ordinary

insight ‘eye,’ not the way we talk about, but that what leads to an inner knowledge of oneself. When that is very clear, it can give you a motivation that you want to continue. But on the depths of that kind of imprint which you receive, on that will depend how much you will want to make an attempt.

Ed: Right.

Mr. Nyland: You understand what I mean.

Ed: Yes.

Mr. Nyland: Because I’m trying to get at why you are still a little wishy-washy about Work.

Ed: It’s hard to contact something emotionally in me that really wants something; just that: wants it, truly...

Mr. Nyland: Yeah, good. But it is not entirely emotional, isn’t it.

Ed: I ... I don’t follow.

Mr. Nyland: It definitely ... if you want to define it for yourself, you want something else that will help you to produce balance within.

Ed: Right.

Mr. Nyland: Because that’s what you mean by ‘solidity.’

Ed: Right.

Mr. Nyland: The solidity can also be used for the building of something else as a foundation then; and then you must define for yourself what is it you want to build. How do you look at your life when you’re twenty-eight, where it will be ten years from now. What do you wish to accomplish—not in ordinary life, but as a Man.

Ed: Why, more of a wider or deeper understanding of ... of ... of anything.

Mr. Nyland: Yah, it is right. Yah, but you have to be a little bit more specific, because there is too much knowledge around.

Ed: I don’t mean knowledge. I mean I ... I want to experience it more deeply, more really what I mean by ‘really’ than I am now, which is pretty much not at all.

Mr. Nyland: Yes, I understand that. Can you define it a little bit more, in a description. When Gurdjieff talks about ‘Harmonious Man,’ what do you understand by it.

Ed: Well, I kind of picture it visually as just wide-open eyes, without any fog before him. You know...

Mr. Nyland: You mean...



Ed: ...like babies' eyes...

Mr. Nyland: ...only clarity, you mean?

Ed: Only? That seems very big.

Mr. Nyland: Yah, but harmonious is connected with harmony.

Ed: But I ... Yeah, well to me, like, I ... it would have ... that would have to happen for me—to understand that—to be harmonious.

Mr. Nyland: All right. Right.

Ed: I mean, the three centers, as I understand it, have to be operating smoothly.

Mr. Nyland: It's true—whatever it is that Harmonious Man is made up of, while he is harmonious. Still, you can have an idea about the concept of what would be desirable as a Harmonious Man. What is actually the function, or how would a Harmonious Man behave. I think clarity is right.

Ed: Exactly as he would behave, he would just live ... experience it totally.

Mr. Nyland: Would he produce a sound...

Ed: A sound?

Mr. Nyland: ...of harmony? Would he strike a chord in his life?

Ed: Yes. Yes.

Mr. Nyland: Would his life vibrate?

Ed: Yes.

Mr. Nyland: You see, you have to be a little clearer more about a certain aim that you want, because it's not only that you wish to be clear, or have clarity in your mind. It also means that you have to use it, or that it has to become noticeable. It may not be in a large circle and it may also be for yourself and stay within yourself in the wish then of creating an atmosphere, but I think the reason for the foundation is not only to have the balance. When I balance ... have a balance I weigh things, and therefore I must be able to choose between that what is right and what is wrong. And out of that gradually will come the idea "should I Work for the sake of saying it is right for me," and I must then define what I consider 'right' for me. This kind of idea—of what is right—is connected with what I expect to become if I follow such a method. And it may be wish for freedom. And it may be a wish for harmony. It may be a development of one's character so that one can be a real Man in any kind of a condition, regardless of where one is. It can also take on a religious form of saying that I, as a Man, have to fulfill a certain task

on Earth. And it leads to all kind of other questions of: what is this Earth in relation to where I am and wish to go away from; and what is it that keeps me in bondage of the Earth, what it is in myself that I could compare with that kind of a bondage.

You understand a little bit what I mean...

Ed: Yah, I think so.

Mr. Nyland: ...and I wished you would think about it. It is right to have a clear, open eye, but it also means it has to read. It's right to have in a mind a certain clarity, but it also must start to function. And our functioning of the mind, for the time being, is thinking. The function for the feeling, even when it goes to the emotion, is of course to have certain vibration rates which I say are 'emotional' in quality, but the real intent of an emotion is to have an ... an intuition.

What is it really that I wish for myself: An instinct that I can rely on, an intuition that gives me a viewpoint with the force connected with it to reach it; and with the mind, a clarity of being able to see straight and not to be bothered by many other thoughts that happen to come around. That could be an aim for a Man, and for that reason he could say, "I wish to Work on myself."

All right, Ed?

Ed: Thank you. That's why I keep coming back.

Mr. Nyland: That is right. Yes, I know. I know that.

So, what. You must ... you must use the time. You see, you have Monday, you talk on Monday; now I'm here and you don't talk, and not enough.

Someone: There's a hand, Mr. Nyland.

Mr. Nyland: Huh? Then you have to speak or I cannot see you. Who is it?

Linda Goldman: Here. Linda Goldman.

Mr. Nyland: Yes.

Linda: Um, for the last month I've Worked whenever I thought of it, but it's been very difficult for me to ... to have any Impartiality in my efforts. Because I can't ... I've tried to formulate this question, and it's very difficult because I don't understand what's wrong. It's almost as though an element of fear has been added, uh...

Mr. Nyland: Didn't you bring that up once before?

Linda: In ... in a way. After I spoke to you in May.

Mr. Nyland: I seem to remember it. That question of fear that came up—that you really have no reason of existing. But, tell me a little bit. When you say you 'Work' or you make an 'attempt,'

actually why ... or when do you do it.

Linda: I have certain times during the day. In the morning I Work. I have a note that I wrote myself in my car to remind me to Work when I leave my car. I make a Work effort when I come into the building where I work. And then, usually the whole morning goes without my thinking of Work, or being able to Work.

Mr. Nyland: What would happen if you take the little note from the car with you and put it in front, on the desk where you work. Is it that kind of work you are doing?

Linda: I ... well, I was ... I don't know. I don't think I could really Work, because it's too harried.

Mr. Nyland: Maybe it's possible that you cannot Work, but what do you do before you really get into the car.

Linda: I make a Work effort when I ... I have dogs that I take out...

Mr. Nyland: Oh, that's good.

Linda: ...in the morning. I usually think of Work as soon as I get up, but somehow...

Mr. Nyland: Does the dog work on you?

Linda: We work together. [laughter] It's good in the morning, a very good time.

Mr. Nyland: Now wait a minute: you say it's 'good.' I'm perfectly willing to accept it, but describe it a little bit, will you? Because we're talking about Impartiality—you say, "I have 'difficulty' with that."

Linda: Well, because lately I have. I don't really understand why.

Mr. Nyland: Take certain conditions in which there is no question about partiality or Impartiality. I have said before, when you walk you don't really care one way or the other as long as you get where you want to go. You're not describing your walk, are you?

Linda: No.

Mr. Nyland: How beautiful it is, and the rest?

Linda: No. I can ... I can do that.

Mr. Nyland: Okay. Then when you can experience, in that particular process, Impartiality, can you extend it a little bit further, swinging your arms. Can you walk backwards.

Linda: Yes.

Mr. Nyland: Can you walk up the stairs with Impartiality.

Linda: Um...

Mr. Nyland: See, I start to connect it now with a little bit of an aim. Can you slow down your motions in walking. Still keep on being active in that way, with the body. Can you tell yourself, “I am walking,” or “this body is walking, this body is swinging its arms.” Can you become Impartial about little activities that you do, sometimes as routine, sometimes habitual, which, as it is habitual, you can bring back to your ordinary consciousness. In that way, can there be a little ‘I’ simply Observing you as you happen to be at that time?

Linda: I can do that, but ... but I stop...

Mr. Nyland: No.

Linda: ...almost on purpose.

Mr. Nyland: I doubt very much that you do it. You say you *can* do it. I want to know that you actually did it. Supposing we say tomorrow morning, what time do you get up?

Linda: Six o’clock.

Mr. Nyland: What? Six?

Linda: Yes.

Mr. Nyland: Five minutes past six, you start to Work.

Linda: Yes.

Mr. Nyland: And then never mind what you are doing, you try to hold onto that. Because you are free and you can do whatever you like and in relation to whatever it is you have to do—dressing and so forth—but at five minutes past six you have to have a little piece of paper somewhere outside of the bed, or above the door you bump your head in it, and say, “Oh yes, I’m reminded.” And then, Work. But Work now in a simple way, only at such times when that what you are doing you could be Impartial about. Can you be Impartial about the way you talk?

Linda: No.

Mr. Nyland: Can you not simply say “Wuh, duh, duh, duh, duh, duh”? Can’t you do that?

Linda: I can, but I ... I’m identified.

Mr. Nyland: Why! With that?

Linda: Well, yeah. [laughter]. I immediately think that it’s that—I mean, I always, like, name it.

Mr. Nyland: No. Why. Is it music to your ears?

Linda : No, it’s the opposite, I guess.

Mr. Nyland: All right. [laughter] Can we eliminate that and make it a sigh? Can you breathe deeply? Intentionally?

Linda: Yes.

Mr. Nyland: Can you swing your arms, stretch them out in front, up, sideways, down again—sitting up exercises, you know?

Linda: Yes.

Mr. Nyland: Whatever it may be, can't you do it? Or make certain movements which really do not require any liking or disliking, and not any name-giving.

I think you have to simplify your efforts. I think you have to get into the car and then get out again, and go in again. I think you have to stop the car, get out and then go back, and sit, and then get out. I think you have to repeat several times the same thing: first time, unconscious; second time, as Conscious as you can make it so that actually at such a time there is something impersonal and Impartial to that what you are, and it becomes an acceptance of yourself which of course is registered in your mind. Can you take steps? Measure them?

Linda: Yes.

Mr. Nyland: Can you walk slow or fast, as you wish?

Linda: Yes.

Mr. Nyland: Can you look, when you walk on the street, in the shop windows all the time, not on the other side of the street; and the next block, only the street and not the shop windows?

Linda: Yes.

Mr. Nyland: Can you walk with your head down during a block? It's difficult—you might run into someone—but, can you try it? Make such attempts. They are a little unusual, but they are made for the purpose of giving you an opportunity to remember a little 'I'. And you make this little 'I' when you really in that way could become Conscious of this body just walking and doing nonsensical things, but only for one purpose: to help the little 'I' Observe you.

You have to extend your efforts much and much more, Linda.

Linda: Yes.

Mr. Nyland: You're limiting them. That is why you don't have the experience of Impartiality.

All right? Those are little tasks, aren't they.

Linda: Yes.

Mr. Nyland: When you go to bed tonight and you are just nicely covering up, and so forth, will you get out again?

Linda: Yes.

Mr. Nyland: And do it over?

Linda: Yes.

Mr. Nyland: All right.

Linda: Thank you.

Mr. Nyland: Good. But you know, you know what you must do in addition.

Linda: What. [laughter]

Mr. Nyland: Try to remember yourself, Linda.

Linda: Oh, that. [laughter] Okay.

Mr. Nyland: All right. Good.

Other kind of questions.

Gene Salerno: Mr. Nyland.

Mr. Nyland: Yah?

Gene: It's Gene Salerno.

Mr. Nyland: Yes.

Gene: Last Monday I brought up a question that bothered me, about learning about facts, and you told me that it's ... it's obvious that in my attempts—or at least it sounded like this, I'm not sure it was—in my attempts to Observe myself and discover facts, that I was coloring these facts through personality or type and such things, and that I should try simply to accept myself. I'm still bothered. It's ... I'm sure it's a theoretical question, but I'm still bothered by it. I can't understand how I can learn facts about myself that I don't like, and not want to change them.

Mr. Nyland: Yah. One is bound that way. It has been the result of education, that of course is why it is so difficult. Almost immediately when you walk fast and it is a little too fast you will slow down, or when someone else will see you, you will put on a face. You cannot remain the same in different conditions, and neither in the conditions of your own mind when a fact of yourself comes to its knowledge.

But, that exactly is the process. The acceptance of oneself means, of course, *whatever* I am at any one time—angry or not. But, I don't accept that what is the anger itself. I accept only the existence of my body, and if I do that I eliminate a great deal of the thought and the feelings about any kind of behavior. And I think that's where you still get stuck: You criticize it on the level of an unconscious existence of life on Earth. If you could accept the fact of your existence as a physical body; being affected of course by the feeling and the thought but accepting simply

the existence of yourself as it is, and not wanting to inquire as to the cause why it happened to be the way it is.

There is a difference between a manifestation and that what is the essential quality of a body. That what a body is, need not manifest. It can exist as a Being and you can make experiments that way: By just Being, by standing still and not doing anything, if possible not even to be too active in your mind. The result, for instance, and which would help you a great deal: If you could relax.

Has it been explained—the relaxation as a certain exercise?

Gene: Yes.

Mr. Nyland: And have you done it?

Gene: No, I've never tried that.

Mr. Nyland: Well, you see, then of course my question is: Why don't you. When it is given as something that could help you and you honestly are interested in wanting to be helped, I would try it. But it has to be done correct, of course, and it does require some time. But if at such a time the results of a relaxation exercise is the realization of the body existing, and really not much more; because everything else should be Drained out, and then the existence of the body being there—and I know it's there because I can pinch it, I know it exists—then at such a time, of a relaxation to the bitter end, can go over in the realization that this body is still alive. And maybe there is a possibility of then realizing that life is really what makes the body exist.

Try to understand that the body itself is only a form in which life is represented. The manifestations are only behavior forms of an essential quality, or even of an inner life. But that what is important for one, as far as the outside world is concerned, is of course the manifestation itself, and the form. From the standpoint of inner life, what is important is the fact that life exists in this form and in any form, and that for the little 'I' it is necessary to recognize the existence of life. If we do it with our ordinary mind, we get stuck on the form and there is no possibility of what I call making the form 'transparent.' The little 'I' having a quality of Objectivity, functions like x-rays. It penetrates through that what is form. It does not go through bones, but the little 'I' *does* go through bones and comes down to the marrow of one's own existence as essence; and when one is very quiet and really of no concern, and not being concerned by either the outside world or even by one's ordinary world within oneself, comes to the realization of an existence of this life being there.

Will you try that.

Gene: Yes. I ... I believe I understand what you're saying and I believe I've had a certain type of experience that makes ... allows me to understand it rather than just to hear your words.

Mr. Nyland: Okay. Okay.

Gene: But, I still ask: Where does change come in. Am I mixing up ordinary life with...

Mr. Nyland: Yes.

Gene: ...inner life?

Mr. Nyland: That's right. You're mixing up unconscious existence with a few words that belong really to a Conscious life, or a description of it. I think your mind is still too operative, too active. That's why I said reduce it by means of relaxation: Because that starts with the relaxation of the mind and emptying the mind as much as possible of all kind of thoughts which hang on.

We will talk more about that next week, if you like.

Gene: Thank you.

Mr. Nyland: See what you can do now. Maybe it can be of help.

All right?

Gene: Yes, I will. Thank you.

Mr. Nyland: Good. I hear that instrument. Huh, Bill.

Bill Henniger: Yes.

Mr. Nyland: Then I think we stop tonight. It's warm enough anyhow. But remember what I have said. Work begins when the meeting is over.

Darryl Salerno: Mr. Nyland?

Mr. Nyland: Yes?

Darryl: Darryl Salerno. Um...

Mr. Nyland: Yah, but you know this little instrument...

Darryl: I'll just say something real quick.

Mr. Nyland: Huh?

Darryl: Please.

Mr. Nyland: Go ahead.

Darryl: It's been, um, such a long time since I've been able to make any attempts that I thought that maybe if I ... if I just stated, in front of everybody, that I was going to make as many



attempts this week as possible...

Mr. Nyland: Very good.

Darryl: ...and talk about it next week.

Mr. Nyland: Yes, very good. That will help you, and next time you can be the first one to talk about it. [laughter]

Darryl: That will help.

Mr. Nyland: That is the additional help.

Darryl: Thank you.

Mr. Nyland: Good night, everybody.

End of tape